



# MELT 2025

## MRVED Educators Learning Together



Lac qui Parle Valley High School (LqPV)  
2860 291st Avenue, Madison MN 56256  
January 20, 2025  
8:40 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

### General Information

**REGISTRATION WILL OPEN ON 12/11/2024 @ 7:30 A.M.**

### REGISTRATION LINK

\*\*\*The password protection will be removed on 12/11/2024 @ 7:30 a.m.\*\*

- ❖ The agenda for the day consists of:
  - Four (4) one-hour sessions with a lunch break between sessions 3 & 4.
  - The sessions are 1 to 2 hours in length. This will also be noted in the description. You **do not have to worry** about this when registering. Registration is set up to move you through the process based on your session selections. Do **NOT** skip a question to allow for the multiple hour session.
  - Some sessions are offered more than once to allow you flexibility in registering.
- ❖ Morning coffee, juice, hot water (bring your own tea bags, hot chocolate packets, etc.), assorted muffins, and yogurt will be available upon your arrival at Lac qui Parle Valley High School from 8:00—8:35 a.m., compliments of your administrators. Enter through Door #5 (follow the walkway to the left of the eagle), pick up your registration materials, and enjoy a morning treat. You may leave your coat on the bleachers in the gym. Please note that cell phone reception is not great within the LqPV school.
- ❖ The first session will start promptly at **8:40 a.m.** Please allow time to find your room and get settled. The room assignments will be noted on your personalized agenda which you will receive that day in your registration materials. The LqPV Student Council will be available to provide directions. They will also have concessions available in the hallways as you move from session to session. There will be 15 minutes passing time between sessions.
- ❖ Lunch will be served from 12:10-12:55 pm. at a cost of \$17.00. The menu will be **Taco Salad: Beef and Chicken, Lettuce, Tomato, Black Beans, Tortilla Chips, Jalapeno, Cheese, Ranch Salsa Dressing, Cookie, and Water.** Heglund Catering will be catering the meal. Should you decide to eat the catered meal, your home district will be collecting your lunch money. Please bring the exact change when paying your district. It is payable to your district, NOT to the MRVED. You will receive a lunch ticket with your registration materials. Your other option is to bring lunch from home. If you bring your lunch from home, there is NOT a microwave to warm up food and there is NOT a cooler to store lunches due to food safety and sanitation regulations. Due to time constraints, number of people, and the distance to nearby towns, we are asking that everyone stay on site for lunch.
- ❖ The registration link will become active on **Wednesday, December 11, 2024, at 7:30 a.m. REGISTER EARLY** as sessions fill quickly. **Registration will close on Friday, December 20, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.** Read through the offerings and course descriptions so you can select the session(s) that will benefit you the most.
- ❖ **WEATHER POLICY** – Should the weather be inclement on January 20, 2025, turn on WCCO-Channel 4 or check out their website [wcco.com](http://wcco.com) (See School Closings under Quick Links). It will be listed under MRVED (just our initials). MRVED will post any cancellations or late start by 6:30 a.m. that day. It will also be posted on our website, [www.mrved.com](http://www.mrved.com).

## 8:40 a.m. - 9:40 a.m. Sessions

### **Networking Description:**

The goal of the networking group is to share ideas and resources. It is expected that each person in attendance will bring something to share and add to the networking. This is not a session where participants will sit and listen to a presenter. Each session has a facilitator. The facilitator will contact the participants for agenda items prior to the MELT.

#### ❖ **1<sup>st</sup> Grade Math Networking**

**Facilitator:** Lisa Dupere, K-3 Math Tutor @ Montevideo

**Audience:** 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Educators

#### ❖ **4<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Networking**

**Facilitator:** Alyssa Besonen, 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher @ LqPV

**Audience:** 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Educators

#### ❖ **Counselors Networking**

**Facilitator:** Angela Lauer, Counselor @ Minneota

**Audience:** School Counselors

#### ❖ **ECSE Networking**

**Facilitator:** Janet Larsen, ECSE Teacher @ LqPV

**Audience:** ECSE Educators

#### ❖ **Elementary Principals Networking**

**Facilitator:** Amy Hiedeman, Elementary Principal @ Dawson-Boyd

**Audience:** Elementary Principals

#### ❖ **High School Science Networking**

**Facilitator:** Tyler Bradseth, Science Teacher @ LqPV

**Audience:** High School Science Educators

#### ❖ **Junior High/High School Math Networking**

**Facilitator:** Bob Foley, Math Teacher @ Montevideo

**Audience:** Junior High and High School Math Educators

### ❖ Junior High/High School Special Education Networking

**Facilitator:** Jeff Guest, Special Education Teacher @ Benson

**Audience:** Junior High and High School Special Education Educators

### ❖ PEERS Curriculum Networking

**Presenter:** Karin Falness, School Psychologist @ MVCC

**Audience:** Special Education Teachers, School Social Workers, Speech Language Pathologists, and School Psychologists

### ❖ Title III Teachers/ELL/ESL Networking

**Facilitator:** Mel Schulte, Title III/ELL/ESL Teacher @ YME

**Audience:** Title III/ELL/ESL Educators

### ❖ Beestingz Curriculum

This session will provide an overview of the new Beestingz Curriculum, developed by teachers, for teachers, through a collaborative effort among agricultural and science educators from Minnesota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Iowa. Designed to meet educational standards in both content and practical application, this curriculum aims to inspire more individuals to pursue the field of beekeeping. By combining foundational knowledge with hands-on learning, Beestingz introduces students to the science, sustainability, and real-world skills of beekeeping. Additionally, we'll preview Beestingz Part 2, set to launch this summer, which will expand on advanced topics and techniques in beekeeping.

**Presenter:** Chase Olson, 7-12 Grade Agriculture Teacher @ LqPV

**Audience:** 5-12 Grades, Ag Educators, Science Educators, Curious about Honeybees

### ❖ Creating Digital Escape Rooms

In today's digital age, educators are constantly seeking innovative ways to engage students. This presentation will guide you through the process of creating your own digital breakout rooms, empowering you to transform your lessons and enhance student engagement. I'll share one of my 2nd grade escape rooms and then you will have time to create your own. Your first template will be provided - (Trolls themed)! Feel free to bring digital resources or rubrics with you that you may want to use to guide your digital breakout room.

**Presenter:** Emily Enger, 2nd Grade Teacher @ Lakeview

**Audience:** All Educators

### ❖ Dyslexia: Strategies, Tips and Tools

This session focuses on effective activities designed to enhance phonemic awareness skills crucial for student success, particularly for those with Dyslexia. Participants will explore various strategies aimed at empowering students with Dyslexia to improve their reading and spelling abilities. Discover engaging methods that foster literacy development and promote confidence in students facing these challenges.

**Presenter:** Keisha Louwagie, Special Education Teacher @ YME, Dyslexia Consultant

**Audience:** K-6 Educators

**Licensure:** Reading, PBIS/Accommodations

### ❖ **Embracing Diversity: Making Our Schools Safe and Welcoming for All People and Welcoming for Everyone.**

At no time in our history have we had a greater opportunity to mold America's future. Embracing Diversity is a hands-on, interactive forum that encourages us to get in touch with our own fear and bias, then apply specific skills for conducting courageous but civil dialogue. It also includes discussion of necessary systemic change. Participants will leave the session inspired and armed with techniques they can use immediately to replace racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination with understanding and harmony. Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the UN says, "Our hope is the generation coming up. We couldn't agree more.

**Presenter:** Denny Smith, Owner/Speaker of Dennis Smith Training, LLC

**Audience:** K-12 Educators and Administration

**Licensure:** Cultural Competency

### ❖ **Empowering Mentors: Strategies for Supporting Teacher Growth**

This session is tailored for educators who are currently mentoring or preparing to take on a mentoring role. Through reflective activities and collaborative discussions, participants will assess their current mentoring practices and explore innovative approaches to foster teacher growth and development. The session will equip mentors with practical tools, strategies, and resources, including effective feedback techniques, to guide and support teachers in creating student-centered learning environments that promote success for all learners.

**Presenter:** Lisa Gregoire, Director of SWWC New Teacher Center @ Southwest West Central Service Cooperative

**Audience:** Current or Future Mentors

### ❖ **Ethical Decision Making in School Social Work (2 Hours)**

Ethical decision making is a process. There are many times in social work when there is not a clear cut answer available to resolve a complex ethical issue. Todd and Darla Swedzinski are both licensed school social workers who have been working in schools since 1994. During this session, participants will learn the history of ethics and will also learn how to use an Ethical Decision-Making Model for difficult situations. This session will count towards the two hours of ethics needed for social work licensure in the State of Minnesota.

**Presenters:** Darla Swedzinski, Social Worker @ Dawson-Boyd; Todd Swedzinski, Social Worker @ Montevideo

**Audience:** Social Workers

**Licensure:** Ethics - Minnesota Social Work Licensure

### ❖ **FastBridge Progress Monitoring 101**

Our school district started using FastBridge last year. We have found that progress monitoring through FastBridge is an efficient tool to track student's progress. Learn how to set up, and give progress monitoring assessments for the student's you need to track! You will have time to set up progress monitoring of your own. Make sure to bring a device and your FastBridge login. You may want to bring a list of what interventions your students are working on. This will help you identify which process monitor you would choose for each student.

**Presenters:** Heidi Huseby, MTSS Coordinator @ Montevideo; Samantha Seeman, Title I Coordinator @ Montevideo

**Audience:** K-4 Educators

### ❖ Funding Your Muse: Finding Grant Opportunities for Classroom Arts Projects

Attendees will get an overview on educational grants offered by Southwest Minnesota Arts Council and the Minnesota State Arts Board. We'll go over the questions on applications and how they are evaluated.

**Presenter:** Georgette Jones, High School ELA Teacher, Regional Arts Advocate

**Audience:** All Educators

### ❖ Get Out and Volunteer for Credit

Little ones crying because they need a diaper change, or to be feed or just because they are fussy, a third grader that is struggling with reading, a second grader that doesn't understand the new math concept, a special needs student that appreciates someone spending time with them, a lunchroom full of chaos, an elderly person looking forward to a visit each day from a high school student, an elderly person that can't wait to have the newspaper read to them or have their nails painted, and more. These are all examples of some of the situations that our students at Dawson-Boyd experience as a Service Learning student. During this session I will share information on establishing a Service Learning Course in your school. We will discuss what is happening at Dawson-Boyd with our Service Learning program and how what we do can be implemented into your school.

Our program allows students to volunteer in service areas within our community (elementary school, high school, care center, assisted living, DAC center, etc.) I will share with you the standards that we use for our program, the requirements for our program, the packet that our high school students receive at the beginning of the school year and more. We will discuss credit(s) that students receive and how they earn those credits. We have a unique connection with our program where some of our students have the opportunity to be placed in our local hospital and spend one week (for a semester) in each department that our healthcare center offers (yes, it takes them the entire semester to cover all of the departments). Some of our students also have the opportunity to watch actual surgeries. Service Learning has been a part of the Dawson-Boyd curriculum for 35 years and we have perfected our program as we have grown. Come see what you can do to create this program for your school and community.

**Presenter:** Karen Anderson, Service Learning Coordinator, FACS Teacher & Elementary Tech Time @ Dawson-Boyd

**Audience:** High School Educators, Principals, and Superintendents

### ❖ Human Trafficking

MN BCA Special Agent Trent Fischer will provide an overview of the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension-led MN Human Trafficking Investigators Task Force (MNHITF) and its response to human trafficking. He will also share information about signs of human trafficking and how to report suspected trafficking.

**Presenters:** Trent Fischer, Special Agent @ Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

**Audience:** All Educators

## ❖ Introduction to Orthographic Mapping and Dictation Writing

Are you wondering ways to implement the Science of Reading into your instruction? This session will be an introduction to the transition from memorizing words to teaching kids how to map out words. There will also be a focus on the importance of dictation writing for students in order for you, the teacher, to discover areas that the student may need further instruction.

**Presenter:** Karen Dalager, Kindergarten Teacher @ Minneota

**Audience:** Kindergarten, 1st grade, 2nd grade Reading Educators

**Licensure:** Reading

## ❖ Journal Writing for Engagement

Because paper has more patience than people.

— Anne Frank, *The Diary of a Young Girl*

Socrates, the ancient Greek philosopher, suggested that “the unexamined life is not worth living.” Indeed, people have been examining their lives through reflective journals throughout the ages. Reflection through writing (the process of reconstructing and making meaning of experiences) is an effective way of accomplishing key learning objectives: academic journals help students generate ideas, create a record of thoughts and feelings in response to what they are reading, and explore their own lives and concerns in relation to what they are reading and learning. Discover methods and strategies to increase student engagement with various types of journal writing.

**Presenter:** Loral Webster, ELA Teacher @ Dawson-Boyd

**Audience:** Grades 7-12 Educators, All Content Areas

## ❖ Just Brisk it! How Google’s AI Tool Can Make Your Life Easier and Save Time

An intro to Google’s AI tool Brisk. We will do a real time presentation using Brisk and its tools related to lesson plans, presentation creation, rubric creation, grading, quizzes, YouTube, plagiarism and a discussion on AI detection. We will then look at a few other useful AI skills and tools to help you save time. If you aren’t already using AI and Brisk to help with your daily tasks hopefully this will change your mind.

**Presenter:** Marcy Nuytten, High School Social Studies Teacher @ Lakeview

**Audience:** Grades 4-12 Educators, All Content Areas

## ❖ Manageable In-Class Mental Health Strategies

We all know that our students are coming to school with various mental health symptoms and that these can severely impact their school interactions and learning. But what can you reasonably do to attempt to help them focus while in your classroom? This session will start with a very quick overview of trauma/stress, the brain and potential symptoms. Then we'll jump into strategies that you can realistically employ in a classroom full of kids - whether you know who is experiencing mental health symptoms or not. Brinna Langford is a Licensed Graduate Social Worker who holds Minnesota teaching licenses in General Education and Special Education, has a Masters in Special Education with a focus on trauma and a Masters in Social Work. Brinna taught Special Education in Alaska and Minnesota for over 10 years before switching careers.

**Presenter:** Brinna Langford, Therapist at Woodland Centers @ LqPV

**Audience:** All Educators

**Licensure:** Mental Illness, PBIS/Accommodations

### ❖ **Neurographic Art**

Neurographic art is a meditative and intuitive creative process that connects the conscious and unconscious mind. This art form encourages deep self-reflection and expression, promoting relaxation and mindfulness through its unique approach.

**Presenter:** Tamara Isfeld, Art Teacher @ YME

**Audience:** Grades 5 - 12 Art Emphasis

### ❖ **Probing and Other Meaningful Opportunities that Check for Understanding and Make Students Think**

Do you sometimes wonder whether the people you are working with understand you, what you want them to do or want them to know? Are there times you aren't sure your students have fully grasped a concept, or even just the directions? Join us for an interactive session that looks at meaningful ways to check for understanding, ask probing questions, and clarify expectations and directions. Participants will have the opportunity to explore strategies shared by the presenter as well as share their own strategies with their colleagues that they find useful.

**Presenter:** Daniel Hovland, Director @ MRVED

**Audience:** All Educators

### ❖ **Props, Movement, and More!!**

Parachute, scarves, noodles, glowsticks, beanie babies, and more! Come move and play and lesson share your favorite things to do with props in your room!

**Presenter:** Kim Bruguier, K-5 Music Educator @ Mitchell School District, Division President @ National Assoc. for Music Educat.

**Audience:** Elementary/Middle School Music

**Licensure:** PBIS/Accommodations

### ❖ **Suicide Prevention**

Suicide has its roots in mental health; providing an effective front line response to warning signs of students exhibiting suicidal behavior is key to prevention. Schools play a key role in suicide prevention. Teachers, mental health providers, and all other school personnel who interact with students play an important role in keeping them safe. Building relationships and protective factors and, of course, understanding the warning signs of suicide are key to prevention.

**Presenter:** Brian Skogen, Social Worker @ Canby

**Audience:** All Educators

**Licensure:** Mental Illness, Suicide

### ❖ The Obstacles of Teaching an LCT Language like Dakota

An introduction to the Dakota language and texts followed by problems faced finding materials even in the age of the internet.

**Presenter:** Chuck (Ishna) Thode, Dakota Language Teacher @ YME

**Audience:** All Educators

**Licensure:** Native American History

### ❖ The Rewiring of Childhood

We will explore the growing mental health crisis among young people compared to previous generations, particularly in the U.S., with a significant increase coming after 2010. Some themes we will investigate are the rise of phone-based childhood, changes in parenting styles, the use of social media, and the increasing presence of individualism & entitlement. We will look at the need for resilience-building strategies, both in education and in the broader culture, to help young people navigate the challenges of the modern world with greater emotional strength and mental well-being, as well as the importance of free play and face-to-face human interaction and connection in fostering a sense of belonging and security. The work of researchers and authors Jon Haidt, Jean Twenge, Leonard Sax & Abigail Schrier will be the focus of the content we discuss in this session together. We will discuss specific strategies that can be implemented immediately to begin to right the ship and bring back the childhood we want for our kids and know they need, and set them up for better resilience and mental health in the teenage and young adult years.

**Presenter:** Jennie Gunlogson, Doctor of Chiropractic @ Cornerstone Chiropractic

**Audience:** All Educators

### ❖ Thriving, Not Surviving

Teaching is more than a profession—it's a calling that shapes the lives of others while challenging us to grow. This session focuses on empowering educators to thrive, not just survive, by balancing professional responsibilities with personal fulfillment. Explore strategies to manage stress, build resilience, and reignite your passion for teaching. Learn how to set boundaries, nurture your well-being, and develop a growth mindset that benefits both your career and personal life. We will look at sustaining a thriving classroom environment while staying energized, motivated, and fulfilled in every aspect of the journey.

**Presenters:** Mitchell Kent, Elementary Principal @ Benson

Brennan Kent, Professor of Teaching and Learning @ Minnesota State University, Moorhead

**Audience:** All Educators



## *9:55 a.m. - 10:55 a.m. Sessions*

### **Networking Description:**

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#### ❖ **Art Networking**

**Facilitator:** Kennar Louwagie, Art Teacher @ Minneota

**Audience:** Art Educators

#### ❖ **Business Networking**

**Facilitator:** Karen Gustafson, Business Teacher @ Lakeview

**Audience:** Business Educators

#### ❖ **Curriculum/Standards/Assessments Networking**

**Facilitator:** Maureen Heinecke, Director of Teaching and Learning @ LqPV

**Audience:** Curriculum Directors/Leaders and Directors of Teaching & Learning

#### ❖ **Preschool Networking**

**Facilitator:** Stephanie Kelly, Preschool Teacher @ Dawson-Boyd

**Audience:** Preschool Educators

#### ❖ **World Languages Networking**

**Facilitator:** Erin Lippert, Spanish Teacher @ Montevideo

**Audience:** World Language Educators

## ❖ 6 Types of Working Genius

Would you like to be more energized at work? Find more joy in work? Be more effective working with others? Utilizing the Working Genius model can help with each of these areas!

The Working Genius model is 20% personality and 80% productivity. People who understand their geniuses show up to work happier, are more effective, and play well with others. The 6 Types of Working Genius is a model that helps people discover their natural gifts in order to thrive in their work and life. When people better understand the types of work that bring them more energy and fulfillment and avoid work that leads to frustration and failure, they can be more self-aware, more productive and more successful. It's time to discover the 6 Types of Working Genius.

Cindy McKittrick, a Certified Working Genius Facilitator, will introduce you to the 6 Types of Working Genius and show you how this model makes individuals and teams more innovative, strategic, and effective!

Join Wade and Cindy in an exploration of the 6 Types of Working Genius.

**Presenters:** Wade McKittrick, Superintendent @ Montevideo; Cindy McKittrick, COO @ BetterU Solutions

**Audience:** All Educators

## ❖ Aftermath of School Tragedy

Schools are confronted with crises and tragedies that require immediate action. Knowing what to do in a stressful period of time is crucial. Having a proactive plan in place to deal with the crisis before it happens is essential in lessening the aftermath of tragedy. Participants will gain a comprehensive understanding of the critical steps necessary for effectively managing school crisis and tragedies. This session will focus on developing proactive strategies for crisis prevention, intervention during a crisis, and post-crisis recovery.

**Presenter:** Brian Skogen, Social Worker @ Canby

**Audience:** All Educators

## ❖ Building and Sustaining Effective Mentoring Programs: Best Practices for School Leaders

A well-developed and effective mentoring program is a cornerstone for supporting educators and ensuring their professional growth, retention, and success. This session is designed for school leaders who currently oversee mentoring programs or are considering developing one. Participants will explore the essential components of an effective mentoring program, including creating a clear vision, establishing conditions for success, and defining the school leader's role in supporting mentors and mentees. Discover best practices, including findings from a statewide mentoring pilot, and consider how to differentiate to meet the diverse needs of educators. Walk away with actionable strategies to improve or build a mentoring program.

**Presenter:** Lisa Gregoire, Director of SWWC New Teacher Center @ Southwest West Central Service Cooperative

**Audience:** School Leaders or Mentor Program Leaders

## ❖ Centers for the Music Classroom

Strategies to incorporate centers into your general music classroom! Ideas for DIY projects, thrift store treasures, and online free resources to use! Also different ways to utilize centers in your classroom.

**Presenter:** Kim Bruguier, K-5 Music Educator @ Mitchell School District, Division President @ National Assoc. for Music Educat.

**Audience:** K-5 Music Educators

### ❖ College Algebra & The Thinking Classroom

This year I structured the dual credit College Algebra class as a Thinking Classroom as described by Peter Liljedahl. Using an open source textbook, I created an entire course outline and day by day problem sets covering all topics in a typical College Algebra course. Join me for some problems and access to all my materials. No experience with Building Thinking Classrooms is required.

**Presenter:** Chris Sieling, 7-12 Math Teacher @ Lakeview

**Audience:** High School Math Educators

### ❖ Creating Digital Escape Rooms

In today's digital age, educators are constantly seeking innovative ways to engage students. This presentation will guide you through the process of creating your own digital breakout rooms, empowering you to transform your lessons and enhance student engagement. I'll share one of my 2nd grade escape rooms and then you will have time to create your own. Your first template will be provided - (Trolls themed)! Feel free to bring digital resources or rubrics with you that you may want to use to guide your digital breakout room.

**Presenter:** Emily Enger, 2nd Grade Teacher @ Lakeview

**Audience:** All Educators

### ❖ Developing Conflict Resolution Skills with The De-escalation Team

What is de-escalation and does it apply to your job? If you work closely with other people, then the answer is yes! Join The De-escalation Team for a discussion and interactive demonstration on de-escalation and how it can help prepare you and your team for any crisis.

**Presenters:** Kayla Dvorak Feld, Co-Founder, Client Services Director @ The De-escalation Team

Amie Durenberger, Co-Founder, Executive Director @ The De-escalation Team

Rhett Romsaas, Co-Founder, Director of Growth & Development @ The De-escalation Team

**Audience:** All Educators

### ❖ Elevating Instruction with AI

This session is designed for teachers that have basic knowledge of AI, and want to deepen their AI skills to improve instruction. We'll explore how you can use artificial intelligence as a partner to create more engaging and student-focused lessons. You'll gain practical skills in using AI for lesson planning, creating well-aligned assessments, and adjusting your teaching for different students' needs. You will get an opportunity to explore one of the following topics more deeply: Lesson Creation & Enhancement, Student Use of AI, Assessment Design, and Resource Curation & Adaptation. Additionally, we will share our tool for setting expectations around AI use in the classroom. You will leave with the knowledge and skills to apply your learning to your specific context.

**Presenter:** Rowen Elsmore, Digital Learning Specialist @ Bloomington Public Schools

**Audience:** All Educators

### ❖ **Embracing Diversity: Making Our Schools Safe and Welcoming for All People and Welcoming for Everyone.**

At no time in our history have we had a greater opportunity to mold America's future. Embracing Diversity is a hands-on, interactive forum that encourages us to get in touch with our own fear and bias, then apply specific skills for conducting courageous but civil dialogue. It also includes discussion of necessary systemic change. Participants will leave the session inspired and armed with techniques they can use immediately to replace racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination with understanding and harmony. Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the UN says, "Our hope is the generation coming up. We couldn't agree more.

**Presenter:** Denny Smith, Owner/Speaker of Dennis Smith Training, LLC

**Audience:** K-12 Educators and Administration

**Licensure:** Cultural Competency

### ❖ **FFA Grant**

This session will provide an overview of the LQPV Agricultural Program, highlighting the various equipment we've acquired over the years. We'll also discuss the structure of our organization and walk through the grant writing process we've established.

**Presenter:** Chase Olson, 7-12 Agriculture Teacher @ LqPV

**Audience:** Ag Educators, Curious about Grants

### ❖ **Human Trafficking**

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### ❖ **Introduction to Orthographic Mapping and Dictation Writing**

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**Presenter:** Loral Webster, ELA Teacher @ Dawson-Boyd

**Audience:** Grades 7-12 Educators, All Content Areas

## ❖ Just Brisk it! How Google’s AI Tool Can Make Your Life Easier and Save Time

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**Presenter:** Marcy Nuytten, High School Social Studies Teacher @ Lakeview

**Audience:** Grades 4-12 Educators, All Content Areas

## ❖ Manageable In-Class Mental Health Strategies

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**Presenter:** Brinna Langford, Therapist at Woodland Centers @ LqPV

**Audience:** All Educators

**Licensure:** Mental Illness, PBIS/Accommodations

## ❖ Minnesota Multi-Tiered System of Support Overview

This session provides background information on MnMTSS and includes information on the development and construction of the framework. Attendees will hear information on how the Self-Evaluation of MnMTSS for District Leadership Teams (SEMI-DLT) supports districts in continuous improvement and where resources and support for implementation of MnMTSS can be found.

**Presenters:** Amy Pahl, SWWC Regional MnMTSS Lead @ Southwest West Central Service Cooperative  
Jean Duffy, State MnMTSS Lead I COMPASS Asst. Director @ MDE

**Audience:** Superintendents, Principals, Curriculum and Assessment Staff, Leadership Teams

## ❖ **Neurodiversity and Disability**

As a newer term to the mainstream, neurodiversity is often misunderstood. This training covers the meaning and history of neurodiversity, dispels myths about neurodivergence, and provides actionable ways to create more inclusive communities that support neurodivergent people.

Learning Objectives:

- Understand the term, history, and types of neurodiversity.
- Discuss how neurodivergence might show up.
- Reflect on misconceptions about neurodiversity and examine the language we use.
- Commit to taking specific actions to support neurodivergent people in your community and be ready to encourage others to join you.

**Presenter:** Keeri Tramm, Director of Disability Initiatives @ Lifeworks

**Audience:** All Educators

## ❖ **READ Act: What Teachers Need to Know**

The READ Act seeks to have every child reading at grade level every year. How does the READ Act support Minnesota teachers in accomplishing this goal? This session will support teachers in connecting the legislative requirements with evidence-based practices in order to implement literacy instruction that is supportive of all learners.

**Presenter:** Julie Novak, State Literacy Director @ MN Department of Education

**Audience:** All Educators, Instructional Coaches

**Licensure:** Reading, PBIS/Accommodations

## ❖ **RefReps: Officiating in the Classroom and the Community**

RefReps offers the most effective and engaging officiating curriculum in the world. The League has a partnership with RefReps that gives schools an economic and turn-key platform for teachers to incorporate officiating into existing curriculum or as a stand alone course that can be taught by anyone. This program will give your students and community members the best opportunity to get involved in officiating with confidence and supports in place that will hopefully lead to a lifetime of effective and enjoyable service as an official.

**Presenter:** Jason Nickleby, Assistant Director for Officiating Services @ MN State High School League

**Audience:** 7-12 Physical Education, Community Education

## ❖ **Supporting Multilingual Learners with AI**

This session is designed for teachers of any AI skill level to transform how we support language learners with the assistance of artificial intelligence (AI). Whether you're new to AI or already experimenting with it in your classroom, this workshop meets you where you are. Through hands-on activities we will develop practical strategies for using AI to evaluate lessons for accessibility, create leveled texts with appropriate scaffolds, and develop academic vocabulary supports. We will work together to generate learning materials that maintain grade-level rigor and support students' language development across content areas. You will leave with increased confidence in using AI as a teaching assistant to enhance instruction for multilingual learners that you can immediately implement in your practice.

**Presenter:** Jodi Bang, Digital Learning Specialist @ Bloomington Public Schools

**Audience:** All Educators

**Licensure:** ELL, PBIS/Accommodations

### ❖ The COVID Aftermath and the Residual Effects on Education and Students

COVID has been, arguably, the single most disruptive force to education we have seen. With the outbreak and school closings in the rearview mirror, what are we left with? Are students recovering from the losses they experienced in their learning? Are all students recovering? Have schools and districts recovered? Are there lingering effects we never expected? During this session, we will look at the state of post-COVID education and the issues that remain. The goal being to help educators identify the challenges that need our attention when it comes to helping our students recover.

**Presenter:** Jay Meiners, Doctor of Education @ SMSU

**Audience:** All Educators and Administrators

### ❖ The Experience of Disability: Focus on Learning Disabilities (Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia)

Through disability simulation and facilitated conversations participants will:

- gain insight into the impact of disabilities,
- learn about strategies to support individuals with disabilities.

**Presenters:** Holly Ward, Superintendent @ Dawson-Boyd; Karin Falness, School Psychologist @ MVCC

**Audience:** All Educators, Administrators, Specialists

**Licensure:** PBIS/Accommodations

### ❖ The Rewiring of Childhood

We will explore the growing mental health crisis among young people compared to previous generations, particularly in the U.S., with a significant increase coming after 2010. Some themes we will investigate are the rise of phone-based childhood, changes in parenting styles, the use of social media, and the increasing presence of individualism & entitlement. We will look at the need for resilience-building strategies, both in education and in the broader culture, to help young people navigate the challenges of the modern world with greater emotional strength and mental well-being, as well as the importance of free play and face-to-face human interaction and connection in fostering a sense of belonging and security. The work of researchers and authors Jon Haidt, Jean Twenge, Leonard Sax & Abigail Schrier will be the focus of the content we discuss in this session together. We will discuss specific strategies that can be implemented immediately to begin to right the ship and bring back the childhood we want for our kids and know they need, and set them up for better resilience and mental health in the teenage and young adult years.

**Presenter:** Jennie Gunlogson, Doctor of Chiropractic @ Cornerstone Chiropractic

**Audience:** All Educators

### ❖ Thriving, Not Surviving

Teaching is more than a profession—it's a calling that shapes the lives of others while challenging us to grow. This session focuses on empowering educators to thrive, not just survive, by balancing professional responsibilities with personal fulfillment. Explore strategies to manage stress, build resilience, and reignite your passion for teaching. Learn how to set boundaries, nurture your well-being, and develop a growth mindset that benefits both your career and personal life. We will look at sustaining a thriving classroom environment while staying energized, motivated, and fulfilled in every aspect of the journey.

**Presenters:** Mitchell Kent, Elementary Principal @ Benson

Brennan Kent, Professor of Teaching and Learning @ Minnesota State University, Moorhead

**Audience:** All Educators

## ❖ Tier 2: Power of Podding (Targeted Skill-Based Groupings)

Come learn about a structure we are utilizing to implement Tier 2 Targeted reading strategies.

**Presenters:** Heidi Sachariason, Elementary Principal @ Montevideo; Heidi Huseby, MTSS Coordinator @ Montevideo

**Audience:** Elementary Teachers of Reading

**Licensure:** Reading

## ❖ Understanding Substance Use Trends Among Students: Insights and Interventions for Educators

Substance use trends among students are constantly evolving, posing challenges for educators and school staff. This session provides a look at the latest trends in student substance use, including vaping, alcohol, and drug use. Participants will learn how to identify early warning signs, understand the impact of substance use on learning and behavior, and implement practical strategies for intervention. Resources for supporting students and collaborating with families will also be shared, equipping attendees with tools to foster healthier school environments.

**Presenter:** Megan Harms, School Link Behavioral Health Substance Use Program Coordinator @ Woodland Centers

**Audience:** K-12 Educators, School counselors, Administrators, and Support Staff.

**Licensure:** Mental Illness, Suicide

## ❖ Understanding the US War in Vietnam

Vietnam Veterans Panel Discussion:

Our presentation will help the target audience "stand in the boots of the troops" to better understand the experience of American military personnel who served in the Vietnam War. The panelists will share their experiences in three themed areas: "Young guys in a foreign place" and their attendant feelings of dislocation; "The Sounds and Smells of Vietnam," where the veterans describe specific sounds and smells that they strongly associate with their Vietnam service; and "A Day in the Life," where each veteran shares specific experiences related to their Vietnam service. We will bring service-related artifacts to examine and try on and will answer audience questions. Our target audience is middle and high school students and we would be proud to present in your classrooms.

**Presenters:** Bill Palmer, Historian and Writer, Retired High School Social Studies Educator, Retired Army Judge Advocate  
Dan Dybsetter, Retired farmer and former Infantryman and Radio Telephone Operator for a Light Infantry Battalion  
Jim Kuel, Retired print/digital media entrepreneur & former Medical Platoon Leader in an Armored Cavalry Squadron

**Audience:** Middle School or High School Educators, Administrators



## *11:10 a.m. - 12:10 p.m. Sessions*

### **Networking Description:**

The goal of the networking group is to share ideas and resources. It is expected that each person in attendance will bring something to share and add to the networking. This is not a session where participants will sit and listen to a presenter. Each session has a facilitator. The facilitator will contact the participants for agenda items prior to the MELT.

#### ❖ **Agriculture Networking**

**Facilitator:** Jenna Smith, Agriculture Teacher @ Benson

**Audience:** Agriculture Educators

#### ❖ **Band Networking**

**Facilitator:** Brock Duncan, Band Teacher @ Benson

**Audience:** Band Educators

#### ❖ **FACS Networking**

**Facilitator:** Karen Anderson, FACS Teacher @ Dawson-Boyd

**Audience:** FACS Educators

#### ❖ **High School Principals Networking**

**Facilitator:** Scott Sawatzky, High School Principal @ LqPV

**Audience:** High School Principals

#### ❖ **Junior High/High School Social Studies Networking**

**Facilitator:** Blair Miller, Social Studies Teacher @ Lakeview

**Audience:** Junior High and High School Social Studies Educators

#### ❖ **Middle School (5-8) Science Networking**

**Facilitator:** Kent Williams, Science Teacher @ Minneota

**Audience:** 5-8 Science Educators

#### ❖ **Speech/Language Networking**

**Facilitator:** Jen Thull, Speech/Language Teacher @ YME

**Audience:** Speech/Language Educators

## ❖ 6 Types of Working Genius

Would you like to be more energized at work? Find more joy in work? Be more effective working with others? Utilizing the Working Genius model can help with each of these areas!

The Working Genius model is 20% personality and 80% productivity. People who understand their geniuses show up to work happier, are more effective, and play well with others. The 6 Types of Working Genius is a model that helps people discover their natural gifts in order to thrive in their work and life. When people better understand the types of work that bring them more energy and fulfillment and avoid work that leads to frustration and failure, they can be more self-aware, more productive and more successful. It's time to discover the 6 Types of Working Genius.

Cindy McKittrick, a Certified Working Genius Facilitator, will introduce you to the 6 Types of Working Genius and show you how this model makes individuals and teams more innovative, strategic, and effective!

Join Wade and Cindy in an exploration of the 6 Types of Working Genius.

**Presenters:** Wade McKittrick, Superintendent @ Montevideo; Cindy McKittrick, COO @ BetterU Solutions

**Audience:** All Educators

## ❖ ACEs, Trauma, and Toxic Stress

Be Curious....Aces, Trauma, and Toxic Stress are becoming overwhelming parts of our classrooms. Understanding the "WHY" is the best way to visualize and form empathy for each student's private logic. Understanding is the key to shifting our mindset from conforming to self regulating.

**Presenter:** John Mader, MES Dean of Students @ Montevideo

**Audience:** All Educators

**Licensure:** Mental Illness, Suicide

## ❖ Beyond the Classroom: The Vital Role of General Education Teachers on the IEP Team

This session will explore the essential role that General Education teachers play on the IEP team and emphasize the importance of active participation in the IEP process. As key contributors, General Education Teachers provide critical insights into students' day-to-day learning experiences and help ensure that IEPs are effectively tailored to meet each student's unique needs. Participants will learn practical strategies for collaborating with other team members, advocating for student success, and integrating accommodations and modifications within the general education classroom.

**Presenter:** Angie Young, Special Education Director @ MVCC

**Audience:** All Educators

## ❖ Creating an Inclusive Classroom for LGBTQIA+ Students

This session aims to empower teachers to make a few meaningful changes that enhance the learning experiences and well-being of all students. It will equip educators with the tools and strategies to create a classroom environment that is inclusive and affirming for LGBTQIA+ students. Participants will explore practical approaches to fostering respect and safety, and learn how to incorporate LGBTQIA+ perspectives into their curriculum. Through interactive activities and discussions, educators will leave with actionable steps to address bias, support students' mental health, and promote an inclusive culture.

**Presenter:** Bree Marlyn, High School ELA @ Minneota

**Audience:** 6th -12th Grade Educators

**Licensure:** Cultural Competency

### ❖ **Dakota/Lakota Sewn Felt Horse Sticks (2 Hours)**

Last year I did Dakota/Lakota parfleche bags in felt. This year I will do sewn horse toys made for young boys and girls. These items also resemble horse sticks that were used to represent a fallen horse or horse that died and was a prominent member of the family. A way of honoring the life of the horse.

We will use templates, felt, scissors and embroidery thread with needles to make a stuffed horse toy. We will discuss the importance of sewing and the need by all Dakota/Lakota peoples. It fits in their history and the importance.

**Presenter:** John Sternet, Art Teacher @ Lakeview

**Audience:** 3rd - 12th Grade Educators

**Licensure:** Native American History

### ❖ **Developing Conflict Resolution Skills with The De-escalation Team**

What is de-escalation and does it apply to your job? If you work closely with other people, then the answer is yes! Join The De-escalation Team for a discussion and interactive demonstration on de-escalation and how it can help prepare you and your team for any crisis.

**Presenters:** Kayla Dvorak Feld, Co-Founder, Client Services Director @ The De-escalation Team

Amie Durenberger, Co-Founder, Executive Director @ The De-escalation Team

Rhett Romsaas, Co-Founder, Director of Growth & Development @ The De-escalation Team

**Audience:** All Educators

### ❖ **Elevating Instruction with AI**

This session is designed for teachers that have basic knowledge of AI, and want to deepen their AI skills to improve instruction. We'll explore how you can use artificial intelligence as a partner to create more engaging and student-focused lessons. You'll gain practical skills in using AI for lesson planning, creating well-aligned assessments, and adjusting your teaching for different students' needs. You will get an opportunity to explore one of the following topics more deeply: Lesson Creation & Enhancement, Student Use of AI, Assessment Design, and Resource Curation & Adaptation. Additionally, we will share our tool for setting expectations around AI use in the classroom. You will leave with the knowledge and skills to apply your learning to your specific context.

**Presenters:** Rowen Elsmore, Digital Learning Specialist @ Bloomington Public Schools

Jodi Bang, Digital Learning Specialist @ Bloomington Public Schools

**Audience:** All Educators

### ❖ **Engaging Families in Literacy Development**

An introduction to the new Family Literacy Toolkit funded through the Minnesota Department of Education will be shared with resources and strategies for family engagement and literacy development for PreK-3. Tools include learning progressions for reading skills, family activities and a foundational workshop for parents. Learn about engaging all families, including multilingual families, through an asset based lens.

**Presenters:** Cindy Check, Consultant @ Creative Compass Consulting

Carmen Cook, Consultant @ Creative Compass Consulting

**Audience:** PreK - Grade 3 Educators

**Licensure:** ELL, Reading

## ❖ Engaging Students with Free Media-Rich Resources

Are you looking to incorporate age appropriate, engaging media into your classroom, but frustrated by the lack of high-quality, standards-based, free (and ad-free!) options? Join Tracy Hanson of Pioneer PBS for an interactive session where you'll learn research-based practices for using media in the classroom and how to access thousands of trusted academic media resources from PBS LearningMedia. Get a hands-on introduction to this rich digital library of free, standards-aligned videos, lesson plans and interactive activities, for every grade level and subject area.

**Presenter:** Tracy Hanson, Market Development Manager @ Pioneer PBS

**Audience:** All Educators

## ❖ Enhancing Learning with Brisk Education and Curipod

This session will introduce you to two powerful tools, Brisk Education and Curipod, designed to revolutionize your teaching practices. You'll learn how to leverage these tools to create engaging, personalized, and efficient learning experiences for your students.

Session Objectives:

Understand the core features of Brisk Education and Curipod.

Learn how to integrate these tools into classroom instruction.

Explore strategies for using these tools to personalize learning and enhance student engagement.

**Presenter:** David Moriarty, Business/Technology Teacher @ Minneota

**Audience:** 5th - 12th Grade Educators

**Licensure:** PBIS/Accommodations

## ❖ Harnessing the Power of AI in the Classroom: Transforming Teaching and Learning

In this interactive session, educators will explore the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in enhancing the classroom experience for both teachers and students. From personalized learning to automating administrative tasks, AI offers a wealth of opportunities to improve teaching practices, foster student engagement, and support individualized learning paths.

Participants will:

Discover AI Tools: Learn about the latest AI-driven platforms and applications that are reshaping education, from AI tutors and learning assistants to intelligent content creation tools.

Personalized Learning: Understand how AI can help tailor lessons, quizzes, and assignments to meet the unique needs of each student, offering differentiated instruction at scale.

Streamline Administrative Tasks: Explore how AI can automate routine tasks like grading, feedback, and scheduling, freeing up time for educators to focus on high-impact teaching activities.

Enhance Student Engagement: Discuss strategies for using AI to create interactive, dynamic learning experiences that motivate students and foster critical thinking and creativity.

Address Ethical Considerations: Consider the ethical implications of using AI in the classroom, from data privacy to ensuring equitable access to AI-driven tools.

By the end of the session, educators will leave with practical knowledge, strategies, and resources for integrating AI into their teaching practice, while navigating the challenges and opportunities this technology presents in an educational context.

**Presenter:** Peyton Mills, High School Principal @ RCW

**Audience:** All Educators

## ❖ Human Trafficking

MN BCA Special Agent Trent Fischer will provide an overview of the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension-led MN Human Trafficking Investigators Task Force (MNHITF) and its response to human trafficking. He will also share information about signs of human trafficking and how to report suspected trafficking.

**Presenters:** Trent Fischer, Special Agent @ Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

**Audience:** All Educators

## ❖ Minnesota Multi-Tiered System of Support Overview

This session provides background information on MnMTSS and includes information on the development and construction of the framework. Attendees will hear information on how the Self-Evaluation of MnMTSS for District Leadership Teams (SEMI-DLT) supports districts in continuous improvement and where resources and support for implementation of MnMTSS can be found.

**Presenters:** Amy Pahl, SWWC Regional MnMTSS Lead @ Southwest West Central Service Cooperative  
Jean Duffy, State MnMTSS Lead I COMPASS Asst. Director @ MDE

**Audience:** Superintendents, Principals, Curriculum and Assessment Staff, Leadership Teams

## ❖ Movement and Games in the Classroom

This presentation is for teachers who want to learn activities that motivate students to be engaged and active in the classroom. Together we will explore ways to incorporate games, art, movement and competition into lessons. Many activities work well for reviewing lists of facts or vocabulary, such as foreign language vocabulary, states/capitals, etc. Also included will be creative ways to review/retell events from stories or historical events as well as games designed to review targeted information before an assessment.

**Presenter:** Teresa Myhre, High School Spanish Teacher @ Minneota

**Audience:** Upper Elementary - High School Educators

**Licensure:** ELL

## ❖ READ Act: What Teachers Need to Know

The READ Act seeks to have every child reading at grade level every year. How does the READ Act support Minnesota teachers in accomplishing this goal? This session will support teachers in connecting the legislative requirements with evidence-based practices in order to implement literacy instruction that is supportive of all learners.

**Presenter:** Julie Novak, State Literacy Director, MN Department of Education

**Audience:** All Educators, Instructional Coaches

**Licensure:** Reading, PBIS/Accommodations

## ❖ **RefReps: Officiating in the Classroom and the Community**

RefReps offers the most effective and engaging officiating curriculum in the world. The League has a partnership with RefReps that gives schools an economic and turn-key platform for teachers to incorporate officiating into existing curriculum or as a stand alone course that can be taught by anyone. This program will give your students and community members the best opportunity to get involved in officiating with confidence and supports in place that will hopefully lead to a lifetime of effective and enjoyable service as an official.

**Presenter:** Jason Nickleby, Assistant Director for Officiating Services @ MN State High School League

**Audience:** 7-12 Physical Education, Community Education

## ❖ **Regulation Strategies for Adults Who Work with Students**

School staff are tasked with working with students who are dysregulated on a daily basis. While we all do our best to maintain our composure, we aren't always well regulated either - we're human! This session will provide strategies to help school staff regulate themselves in order to best help students - even those that sometimes tip us over the edge. Strategies will include things that can be done at school - before, during and after working with kids. While self-care is vital, this session is not about self-care conducted outside of school/work hours. Brinna Langford is a Licensed Graduate Social Worker who holds Minnesota teaching licenses in General Education and Special Education, has a Masters in Special Education with a focus on trauma and a Masters in Social Work. Brinna taught Special Education in Alaska and Minnesota for over 10 years before switching careers.

**Presenter:** Brinna Langford, Therapist at Woodland Centers @ LqPV

**Audience:** All Educators

**Licensure:** PBIS/Accommodations

## ❖ **Supporting Families in Accessing Disability Services**

This session breaks down who likely qualifies for support services outside of school and the steps to start accessing services, from qualification to assessment and annual planning.

*Learning Objectives:*

- Recognize who typically qualifies for Home and Community Based Services
- Learn what services are available and how they can support families with disabilities
- Understand how to initiate a referral for assessment or services, or how to support a family in creating one.
- Identify a student's full support team for accessing services including the lead agency, case manager, service provider, and hopefully teacher!

**Presenter:** Keeri Tramm, Director of Disability Initiatives @ Lifeworks

**Audience:** All Educators (who interact with students with disabilities and their families), Special Education Educators

## ❖ **Ta-Da, It's Data.**

We will take a look at the new math standards, specifically the Data Science anchor standard. I will share some activities and resources for all levels as well as lessons from my high school Intro to Data Science course.

**Presenter:** Chris Sieling, 7-12 Math Teacher @ Lakeview

**Audience:** K-12 Math Educators

## ❖ Targeted Tier 2 Reading Interventions

Explore effective strategies for implementing Tier 2 reading interventions that address the specific needs of students requiring additional support. This session will focus on:

- Selecting evidence-based practices that align with foundational literacy components, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, and comprehension.
- Structuring small-group instruction to maximize engagement and progress.
- Monitoring student growth and adjusting interventions to ensure effectiveness.

Participants will leave with practical tools, actionable plans, and a deeper understanding of how Tier 2 interventions can close reading gaps and support students on their path to literacy success.

**Presenter:** Karen Hartke, K-12 EL & 6th Grade ELA Teacher @ Lakeview

**Audience:** K-6 Educators and Reading Interventionists

**Licensure:** Reading, PBIS/Accommodations

## ❖ Teachers Still Make the Difference

As rapidly as things are changing in education, one thing remains constant. The teacher is still the decisive element in the classroom. TEACHERS STILL MAKE THE DIFFERENCE is a high energy presentation that gives teachers a shot of Positive Mental Attitude about themselves, their students, and life in general. It is light and uplifting yet filled with useful and practical ideas that can be used immediately to build self-esteem and to increase confidence and competence in the classroom.

**Presenter:** Denny Smith, Owner/Speaker of Dennis Smith Training, LLC

**Audience:** All Educators

## ❖ The COVID Aftermath and the Residual Effects on Education and Students

COVID has been, arguably, the single most disruptive force to education we have seen. With the outbreak and school closings in the rearview mirror, what are we left with? Are students recovering from the losses they experienced in their learning? Are all students recovering? Have schools and districts recovered? Are there lingering effects we never expected? During this session, we will look at the state of post-COVID education and the issues that remain. The goal being to help educators identify the challenges that need our attention when it comes to helping our students recover.

**Presenter:** Jay Meiners, Doctor of Education @ SMSU

**Audience:** All Educators and Administrators

## ❖ The Experience of Disability: Focus on Neurodivergence (ADHD, Executive Function, Sensory Processing, Literal/Visual Processing)

Through disability simulation and facilitated conversations participants will:

- gain insight into the impact of disabilities,
- learn about strategies to support individuals with disabilities.

**Presenters:** Holly Ward, Superintendent @ Dawson-Boyd; Karin Falness, School Psychologist @ MVCC

**Audience:** All Educators, Administrators, Specialists

**Licensure:** PBIS/Accommodations

## ❖ The Healing Power of the Vagus Nerve

We will explore the role of the vagus nerve in regulating physical and emotional health. The vagus nerve is a crucial part of the parasympathetic nervous system and helps to reduce stress, promote relaxation, and facilitate healing. Trauma, stress, and emotional blockages can hinder the proper functioning of the vagus nerve, leading to health issues such as anxiety, depression, and chronic pain. We will introduce practical exercises and techniques, including bodywork, breath exercises, and specific postural movements, to stimulate and activate the vagus nerve. These methods aim to restore the body's ability to self-regulate, reduce inflammation, and foster overall well-being. This information can be used to help your own health and wellbeing, or use with your students, or both.

**Presenter:** Jennie Gunlogson, Doctor of Chiropractic @ Cornerstone Chiropractic

**Audience:** All Educators

## ❖ Tier 2: Power of Podding (Targeted Skill-Based Groupings)

Come learn about a structure we are utilizing to implement Tier 2 Targeted reading strategies.

**Presenters:** Heidi Sachariason, Elementary Principal @ Montevideo; Heidi Huseby, MTSS Coordinator @ Montevideo

**Audience:** Elementary Teachers of Reading

**Licensure:** Reading

## ❖ Understanding Substance Use Trends Among Students: Insights and Interventions for Educators

Substance use trends among students are constantly evolving, posing challenges for educators and school staff. This session provides a look at the latest trends in student substance use, including vaping, alcohol, and drug use. Participants will learn how to identify early warning signs, understand the impact of substance use on learning and behavior, and implement practical strategies for intervention. Resources for supporting students and collaborating with families will also be shared, equipping attendees with tools to foster healthier school environments.

**Presenter:** Megan Harms, School Link Behavioral Health Substance Use Program Coordinator @ Woodland Centers

**Audience:** K-12 Educators, School counselors, Administrators, and Support Staff.

**Licensure:** Mental Illness, Suicide

## ❖ Understanding the US War in Vietnam

Vietnam Veterans Panel Discussion:

Our presentation will help the target audience "stand in the boots of the troops" to better understand the experience of American military personnel who served in the Vietnam War. The panelists will share their experiences in three themed areas: "Young guys in a foreign place" and their attendant feelings of dislocation; "The Sounds and Smells of Vietnam," where the veterans describe specific sounds and smells that they strongly associate with their Vietnam service; and "A Day in the Life," where each veteran shares specific experiences related to their Vietnam service. We will bring service-related artifacts to examine and try on and will answer audience questions. Our target audience is middle and high school students and we would be proud to present in your classrooms.

**Presenters:** Bill Palmer, Historian and Writer, Retired High School Social Studies Educator, Retired Army Judge Advocate

Dan Dybsetter, Retired farmer and former Infantryman and Radio Telephone Operator for a Light Infantry Battalion

Jim Kuel, Retired print/digital media entrepreneur & former Medical Platoon Leader in an Armored Cavalry Squadron

**Audience:** Middle School or High School Educators, Administrators



## *1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Sessions*

### **Networking Description:**

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#### ❖ **1<sup>st</sup> Grade Reading Networking**

**Facilitator:** Hailey Gritmacker, First Grade Teacher @ Dawson-Boyd

**Audience:** 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Educators

#### ❖ **6<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Networking**

**Facilitator:** Brandee Shoemaker, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher @ Montevideo

**Audience:** 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Educators

#### ❖ **Elementary Music Networking**

**Facilitator:** Brandon Hurley, Music Teacher @ Dawson-Boyd

**Audience:** Elementary Music Educators

#### ❖ **Elementary Special Education Networking**

**Facilitator:** Dave Schueler, Elementary Special Education Teacher @ YME

**Audience:** Elementary Special Education Educators

#### ❖ **Industrial Technology Networking**

**Facilitator:** Scott Thompson, Industrial Technology Teacher @ Benson

**Audience:** Industrial Technology Educators

#### ❖ **Junior High/High School Language Arts Networking**

**Facilitator:** Georgette Jones, Language Arts Teacher @ MVALC

**Audience:** Junior High and High School Language Arts Educators

#### ❖ **Kindergarten Networking**

**Facilitator:** Holly Kilibarda, Kindergarten Teacher @ Montevideo

**Audience:** Kindergarten Educators

❖ **MnMTSS Support Networking**

**Facilitator:** Amy Pahl, SWWC Regional MnMTSS Lead @ Southwest West Central Service Cooperative  
Jean Duffy, State MnMTSS Lead I COMPASS Asst. Director @ MDE

**Audience:** Superintendents, Principals, Curriculum and Assessment Staff, Leadership Teams

❖ **New(er) Teachers Networking**

**Facilitator:** James Radloff, English Teacher @ MVALC

**Audience:** New(er) Educators

❖ **Nurses Networking**

**Facilitator:** Leah Prestholdt, School Nurse @ Dawson-Boyd

**Audience:** School Nurses

❖ **Physical Education Networking**

**Facilitator:** Amy Reidinger, Physical Education Teacher @ Montevideo

**Audience:** Physical Education Educators

❖ **School Psychologists Networking**

**Facilitator:** Amy Engesser, School Psychologist @ YME

**Audience:** School Psychologists

❖ **Social Workers Networking**

**Facilitator:** Jamie Golberg, Social Worker @ YME

**Audience:** School Social Workers

❖ **3rd Grade Wit & Wisdom Tour**

The Wit & Wisdom Tour will give you tips, tricks, and tid-bits of information on one of the new ELA approved curriculums! Our 3rd grade team is piloting this curriculum and I would love to share what works for us. Remember this is NEW to me! (Each day is a learning adventure, so buckle up and enjoy the ride.)

**Presenter:** Bree Smith, 3rd Grade Teacher @ Lakeview

**Audience:** 3rd Grade Educators, Reading Curriculum Team

**Licensure:** Reading

### ❖ **After the ACEs**

Neuroplasticity is the ability of the brain to form and reorganize synaptic connections. In very basic terms, we will discuss how to rewire the brain after the traumatic experiences and toxic stress have done their damage. We will also discuss how NOT TO BE THE TRIGGER.

**Presenter:** John Mader, MES Dean of Students @ Montevideo

**Audience:** All Educators

**Licensure:** PBIS/Accommodations

### ❖ **An Overview of Promoting Equity through a Language Focused Planning Approach**

Learn about a three session workshop series, based on WIDA resources, that can deepen your knowledge about working with young multilingual learners and their families, PreK-3. We will share key takeaways to strengthen your practices related to reflective practice, planning and implementation strategies, and engaging multilingual families. Resources for further exploration of working with multilingual learners will be shared.

**Presenters:** Cindy Check, Consultant @ Creative Compass Consulting  
Carmen Cook, Consultant @ Creative Compass Consulting

**Audience:** PreK - Grade 3 Educators

**Licensure:** ELL

### ❖ **Back to Basics with Google: Essential Tools for Every Educator**

As the education world buzzes with topics like artificial intelligence and emerging tech, let's take a step back to ensure we have a solid foundation in the basics. This session is designed for educators looking to build or reinforce essential skills in Google Classroom, Google Drive, and Google Sites. We'll cover practical tips for organizing, sharing, and managing content while creating a streamlined learning environment for your students. Whether you're new to these tools or need a refresher, join us to master the basics and enhance your digital teaching toolkit. Bring your Chromebook or device to participate in interactive activities.

**Presenter:** Ashley Kent, Teaching and Learning Coordinator @ Benson

**Audience:** Any Google Suite User

### ❖ **Beyond the Classroom: The Vital Role of General Education Teachers on the IEP Team**

This session will explore the essential role that General Education teachers play on the IEP team and emphasize the importance of active participation in the IEP process. As key contributors, General Education Teachers provide critical insights into students' day-to-day learning experiences and help ensure that IEPs are effectively tailored to meet each student's unique needs. Participants will learn practical strategies for collaborating with other team members, advocating for student success, and integrating accommodations and modifications within the general education classroom.

**Presenter:** Angie Young, Special Education Director @ MVCC

**Audience:** All Educators

### ❖ **Classroom Management: Herding Cats with Style**

We'll explore practical and fun strategies for maintaining control and fostering a positive learning environment, even when things get chaotic. From setting clear expectations to creating engaging activities that keep students on track, this session will show you how to manage diverse classrooms with confidence and creativity. You'll walk away with actionable techniques to reduce disruptions, encourage respect, and turn your classroom into a space where both students and teachers thrive—no cat herding required!

**Presenter:** Brandon Raymo, Assistant Director @ MRVED

**Audience:** All Educators

### ❖ **Coaches Make the Difference: Be a Class Act**

There is something special about coaching that is unmatched in other professions: the thrill of victory, the agony of defeat, and the adrenaline rush that comes from competition. But when you hang up your whistle for the last time, the things that will you cherish most are the relationships: relationships with your players, your fellow coaches, the parents, the fans, and the media. These go far beyond the verdict of the scoreboard. This session helps us keep winning in perspective, create a culture that athletes want to be a part of, and encourage everyone involved to strive for three things: Work Hard, Have Fun, and above all, ALWAYS BE A CLASS ACT.

**Presenter:** Denny Smith, Owner/Speaker of Dennis Smith Training, LLC

**Audience:** K-12 Educators, Administration

### ❖ **Creating an Inclusive Classroom for LGBTQIA+ Students**

This session aims to empower teachers to make a few meaningful changes that enhance the learning experiences and well-being of all students. It will equip educators with the tools and strategies to create a classroom environment that is inclusive and affirming for LGBTQIA+ students. Participants will explore practical approaches to fostering respect and safety, and learn how to incorporate LGBTQIA+ perspectives into their curriculum. Through interactive activities and discussions, educators will leave with actionable steps to address bias, support students' mental health, and promote an inclusive culture.

**Presenter:** Bree Marlyn, High School ELA @ Minneota

**Audience:** 6th -12th Grade Educators

**Licensure:** Cultural Competency

### ❖ **Digging into FastBridge**

Unlock the power of FastBridge data to inform and enhance your whole group instruction! This session will guide you in analyzing FastBridge assessment data to identify student needs, monitor progress, and plan targeted, evidence-based interventions.

Participants will learn how to:

1. Use data to differentiate instruction and provide targeted support for readers who struggle.
2. Align interventions with student-specific literacy needs. This session will equip you with practical tools and strategies to close literacy gaps and drive student achievement.

**Presenter:** Karen Hartke, K-12 EL & 6th Grade ELA Teacher @ Lakeview

**Audience:** K-6 Educators, Administrators

### ❖ Engaging Students with Free Media-Rich Resources

Are you looking to incorporate age appropriate, engaging media into your classroom, but frustrated by the lack of high-quality, standards-based, free (and ad-free!) options? Join Tracy Hanson of Pioneer PBS for an interactive session where you'll learn research-based practices for using media in the classroom and how to access thousands of trusted academic media resources from PBS LearningMedia. Get a hands-on introduction to this rich digital library of free, standards-aligned videos, lesson plans and interactive activities, for every grade level and subject area.

**Presenter:** Tracy Hanson, Market Development Manager @ Pioneer PBS

**Audience:** All Educators

### ❖ Enhancing Learning with Brisk Education and Curipod

This session will introduce you to two powerful tools, Brisk Education and Curipod, designed to revolutionize your teaching practices. You'll learn how to leverage these tools to create engaging, personalized, and efficient learning experiences for your students.

Session Objectives:

Understand the core features of Brisk Education and Curipod.

Learn how to integrate these tools into classroom instruction.

Explore strategies for using these tools to personalize learning and enhance student engagement.

**Presenter:** David Moriarty, Business/Technology Teacher @ Minneota

**Audience:** 5th - 12th Grade Educators

**Licensure:** PBIS/Accommodations

### ❖ Fagen Fighters WWII Museum

Join us for an engaging, one-hour session that delves into the history and significance of the world-renowned Fagen Fighters WWII Museum, a remarkable institution dedicated to preserving and sharing the stories of America's World War II aviation history. Located in Granite Falls, Minnesota, the museum houses a collection of meticulously restored aircraft, including the iconic P-51 Mustang, and offers a rare opportunity to explore the experiences of the brave men and women who served during this pivotal time in history. Come see how schools can become involved in the rich history in our backyard. Fagen Fighters wants to connect the greatest generation to the latest generation.

**Presenter:** Becky Benson, Fagen Fighters WWII Museum

**Audience:** All Educators

## ❖ **Harnessing the Power of AI in the Classroom: Transforming Teaching and Learning**

In this interactive session, educators will explore the transformative potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in enhancing the classroom experience for both teachers and students. From personalized learning to automating administrative tasks, AI offers a wealth of opportunities to improve teaching practices, foster student engagement, and support individualized learning paths.

Participants will:

*Discover AI Tools*: Learn about the latest AI-driven platforms and applications that are reshaping education, from AI tutors and learning assistants to intelligent content creation tools.

*Personalized Learning*: Understand how AI can help tailor lessons, quizzes, and assignments to meet the unique needs of each student, offering differentiated instruction at scale.

*Streamline Administrative Tasks*: Explore how AI can automate routine tasks like grading, feedback, and scheduling, freeing up time for educators to focus on high-impact teaching activities.

*Enhance Student Engagement*: Discuss strategies for using AI to create interactive, dynamic learning experiences that motivate students and foster critical thinking and creativity.

*Address Ethical Considerations*: Consider the ethical implications of using AI in the classroom, from data privacy to ensuring equitable access to AI-driven tools.

By the end of the session, educators will leave with practical knowledge, strategies, and resources for integrating AI into their teaching practice, while navigating the challenges and opportunities this technology presents in an educational context.

**Presenter:** Peyton Mills, High School Principal @ RCW

**Audience:** All Educators

## ❖ **Human Trafficking**

MN BCA Special Agent Trent Fischer will provide an overview of the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension-led MN Human Trafficking Investigators Task Force (MNHITF) and its response to human trafficking. He will also share information about signs of human trafficking and how to report suspected trafficking.

**Presenters:** Trent Fischer, Special Agent @ Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

**Audience:** All Educators

## ❖ **MagicSchool AI**

Are you curious about using AI in the classroom but aren't sure where to start? Join this session to see a basic demonstration of an incredible AI teacher tool - MagicSchoolAI. We will discuss the uses and go over the basic tools available on the site. We will also show you lesson plans, assessments, and student tools we have already used successfully in our classrooms. Finally, you will have time to create your own account and start using the tools right away so you have something practical to take back to your classroom.

**Presenters:** Emma Gregoire, HS Social Studies @ Lakeview; Nicole Fischer, HS Language Arts Teacher @ Lakeview

**Audience:** Middle and High School Educators

### ❖ **Micronesian Culture and Chuukese Language**

Join us for a session designed to help you deepen your understanding of Micronesian culture and history. With more Micronesian students joining the school districts in our region, don't miss out on this chance to learn more about this beautiful and rich culture. This session will dive deep into the many layers of cultural identity and will include a time dedicated to the Chuukese language. You'll walk away having written and learned some new words and Chuukese phrases to use in the future.

**Presenter:** Hope Schmidt, 9-12 Multilingual Teacher @ LqPV  
LqPV Diversity Club, Student Representatives

**Audience:** All Educators

**Licensure:** Cultural Competency

### ❖ **Music, Art, and Movement for the General Education Classroom**

This session is intended for general ed. classroom teachers. Music, art, and movement are important ways to engage your students and get them moving, grooving, and learning! You don't have to be a musician to use music in your classroom! You don't have to be an artist to use art in your classroom!

**Presenter:** Kim Bruguier, K-5 Music Educator @ Mitchell School District, Division President @ National Assoc. for Music Educat.

**Audience:** Elementary Educators

### ❖ **READ Act: What Administrators Need to Know**

The READ Act seeks to have every child reading at grade level every year. How can you support Minnesota teachers in accomplishing this goal? This session will support leaders in knowing the key elements of legislative requirements and the shifts in literacy practices in order to implement literacy instruction that is supportive of all learners.

**Presenter:** Julie Novak, State Literacy Director @ MN Department of Education

**Audience:** School Leaders, Administrators

**Licensure:** Reading

### ❖ **Regulation Strategies for Adults Who Work with Students**

School staff are tasked with working with students who are dysregulated on a daily basis. While we all do our best to maintain our composure, we aren't always well regulated either - we're human! This session will provide strategies to help school staff regulate themselves in order to best help students - even those that sometimes tip us over the edge. Strategies will include things that can be done at school - before, during and after working with kids. While self-care is vital, this session is not about self-care conducted outside of school/work hours. Brinna Langford is a Licensed Graduate Social Worker who holds Minnesota teaching licenses in General Education and Special Education, has a Masters in Special Education with a focus on trauma and a Masters in Social Work. Brinna taught Special Education in Alaska and Minnesota for over 10 years before switching careers.

**Presenter:** Brinna Langford, Therapist at Woodland Centers @ LqPV

**Audience:** All Educators

**Licensure:** PBIS/Accommodations

## ❖ **Supporting Families in Accessing Disability Services**

This session breaks down who likely qualifies for support services outside of school and the steps to start accessing services, from qualification to assessment and annual planning.

### *Learning Objectives:*

- Recognize who typically qualifies for Home and Community Based Services
- Learn what services are available and how they can support families with disabilities
- Understand how to initiate a referral for assessment or services, or how to support a family in creating one.
- Identify a student's full support team for accessing services including the lead agency, case manager, service provider, and hopefully teacher!

**Presenter:** Keeri Tramm, Director of Disability Initiatives @ Lifeworks

**Audience:** All Educators (who interact with students with disabilities and their families), Special Education Educators

## ❖ **Taking Matters into Our Own Hands – Becoming a Teacher Researcher in Your Classroom**

As much as we would like it, our classrooms are never without challenges. All of us can identify a problem area we would love to fix, but too often, the tried-and-true approaches just aren't working. We ask for help, but amidst all the other challenges in the school, help never arrives. The good news is that help can be found; all it takes is a little initiative and experimentation. And like all great researchers, you already have a laboratory – your classroom. During this session you will learn how to conduct targeted experiments in your classroom to solve these challenges, resulting in improved teaching and learning.

**Presenter:** Jay Meiners, Doctor of Education @ SMSU

**Audience:** All Educator

**NOTE:** *The MRVED has indicated which licensure requirements we believe the sessions meet. As always, this is a district-by-district decision and the Continuing Education committee in your district has the final say.*



## *At A Glance*

**8:00 - 8:35 a.m.**      Registration and Breakfast

### **LICENSURES ARE LISTED TO THE RIGHT OF THE SESSION**

**8:40 a.m. - 9:40 a.m.**

1 <sup>st</sup> Grade Math Networking	
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Math Networking	
Counselors Networking	
ECSE Networking	
Elementary Principals Networking	
High School Science Networking	
JH/HS Math Networking	
JH/HS Special Education Networking	
PEERS Curriculum Networking	
Title III Networking	
Beestingz Curriculum	
Creating Digital Escape Rooms	
Dyslexia: Strategies, Tips and Tools	Reading, PBIS/Accom.
Embracing Diversity: Making Our Schools Safe	Cultural Competency
Empowering Mentors: Strategies for Supporting Teacher Growth	
Ethical Decision Making in School Social Work (2 Hours)	Social Workers Ethics
FastBridge Progress Monitoring 101	
Funding Your Muse: Finding Grant Opportunities for Classroom Arts Projects	
Get Out and Volunteer for Credit	
Human Trafficking	
Introduction to Orthographic Mapping and Dictation Writing	Reading
Journal Writing for Engagement	
Just Brisk it! How Google's AI Tool Can Make Your Life Easier and Save Time	
Manageable In-Class Mental Health Strategies	Mental Illness, PBIS/Accom.
Neurographic Art	
Probing and Other Meaningful Opportunities that Check for Understanding	
Props, Movement, and More!!	PBIS/Accom.
Suicide Prevention	Mental Illness, Suicide
The Obstacles of Teaching an LCT Language like Dakota	Native American History
The Rewiring of Childhood	
Thriving, Not Surviving	

## 9:55 a.m. - 10:55 a.m.

Art Networking  
Business Networking  
Curriculum/Standards/Assessments Networking  
Preschool Networking  
World Languages Networking  
6 Types of Working Genius  
Aftermath of School Tragedy  
Building and Sustaining Effective Mentoring Programs  
Centers for the Music Classroom  
College Algebra & The Thinking Classroom  
Creating Digital Escape Rooms  
Developing Conflict Resolution Skills  
Elevating Instruction with AI  
Embracing Diversity: Making Our Schools Safe  
FFA Grant  
Human Trafficking  
Introduction to Orthographic Mapping  
Journal Writing for Engagement  
Just Brisk it! How Google's AI Tool Can Make Your Life Easier  
Manageable In-Class Mental Health Strategies  
Minnesota Multi-Tiered System of Support Overview  
Neurodiversity and Disability  
READ Act: What Teachers Need to Know  
RefReps: Officiating in the Classroom and the Community  
Supporting Multilingual Learners with AI  
The COVID Aftermath and the Residual Effects on Education and Students  
The Experience of Disability: Focus on Learning Disabilities  
The Rewiring of Childhood  
Thriving, Not Surviving  
Tier 2: Power of Podding  
Understanding Substance Use Trends Among Students  
Understanding the US War in Vietnam

**Cultural Competency**

**Reading**

**Mental Illness, PBIS/Accom.**

**Reading, PBIS/Accom.**

**ELL, PBIS/Accom.**

**PBIS/Accom.**

**Reading**

**Mental Illness, Suicide**

## 11:10 a.m. - 12:10 p.m.

Agriculture Networking	
Band Networking	
FACS Networking	
High School Principals Networking	
JH/HS Social Studies Networking	
Middle School (5-8) Science Networking	
Speech/Language Networking	
6 Types of Working Genius	
ACEs, Trauma, and Toxic Stress	<b>Mental Illness, Suicide</b>
Beyond the Classroom: The Vital Role of General Education Teachers on the IEP Team	
Creating an Inclusive Classroom for LGBTQIA+ Students	<b>Cultural Competency</b>
Dakota/Lakota Sewn Felt Horse Sticks (2 Hours)	<b>Native American History</b>
Developing Conflict Resolution Skills with The De-escalation Team	
Elevating Instruction with AI	
Engaging Families in Literacy Development	<b>ELL, Reading</b>
Engaging Students with Free Media-Rich Resources	
Enhancing Learning with Brisk Education and Curipod	<b>PBIS/Accom.</b>
Harnessing the Power of AI in the Classroom	
Human Trafficking	
Minnesota Multi-Tiered System of Support Overview	
Movement and Games in the Classroom	<b>ELL</b>
READ Act: What Teachers Need to Know	<b>Reading, PBIS/Accom.</b>
RefReps: Officiating in the Classroom and the Community	
Regulation Strategies for Adults Who Work with Students	<b>PBIS/Accom.</b>
Supporting Families in Accessing Disability Services	
Ta-Da, It's Data.	
Targeted Tier 2 Reading Interventions	<b>Reading, PBIS/Accom.</b>
Teachers Still Make the Difference	
The COVID Aftermath and the Residual Effects on Education and Students	
The Experience of Disability: Focus on Neurodivergence	<b>PBIS/Accom.</b>
The Healing Power of the Vagus Nerve	
Tier 2: Power of Podding	<b>Reading</b>
Understanding Substance Use Trends Among Students	<b>Mental Illness, Suicide</b>
Understanding the US War in Vietnam	

## 12:10 - 12:55 p.m.

LUNCH

## 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

1<sup>st</sup> Grade Reading Networking  
6<sup>th</sup> Grade Math Networking  
Elementary Music Networking  
Elementary Special Education Networking  
Industrial Technology Networking  
JH/HS Language Arts Networking  
Kindergarten Networking  
MnMTSS Support Networking  
New(er) Teachers Networking  
Nurses Networking  
Physical Education Networking  
School Psychologists Networking  
Social Workers Networking  
3rd Grade Wit & Wisdom Tour  
After the ACEs  
An Overview of Promoting Equity  
Back to Basics with Google  
Beyond the Classroom  
Classroom Management  
Coaches Make the Difference  
Creating an Inclusive Classroom for LGBTQIA+ Students  
Digging into FastBridge  
Engaging Students with Free Media-Rich Resources  
Enhancing Learning with Brisk Education and Curipod  
Fagen Fighters WWII Museum  
Harnessing the Power of AI in the Classroom  
Human Trafficking  
MagicSchool AI  
Micronesian Culture and Chuukese Language  
Music, Art, and Movement for the General Education Classroom  
READ Act: What Administrators Need to Know  
Regulation Strategies for Adults Who Work with Students  
Supporting Families in Accessing Disability Services  
Taking Matters into Our Own Hands

**Reading  
PBIS/Accom.  
ELL**

**Cultural Competency**

**PBIS/Accom.**

**Cultural Competency**

**Reading  
PBIS/Accom**